



Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1 - 11. (cancelled)

12. (currently amended) A method of making bristle arrangements for subsequent use in a brush seal, comprising the steps of:

arranging a plurality of tufts of bristles along a length each having a bead at one end within a fixture;

said arranging step comprising placing each said tuft in the fixture in a skewed fashion relative to a line extending radially from a center of the fixture;

said arranging step further comprising placing each said tuft in said fixture so that a portion of the bristles forming each tuft with said bead project from said fixture to form a plurality of exposed portions; and

joining essentially just said plurality of bristles along said length said exposed portions together so as to form said bristle arrangements.

13. (original) The method as recited in claim 12, wherein the joining step comprises welding.

14. (cancelled)

15. (original) The method as recited in claim 12, wherein said plurality of bristles are metallic.

16. (original) The method as recited in claim 12, further comprising the step of securing the bristle arrangements between plates to form a brush seal.

17. (currently amended) The method as recited in claim 12, wherein said ~~length comprises~~ arranging step comprises arranging said tufts in an arc.

18. (original) The method as recited in claim 17, wherein said arc is a circle.

19. (original) The method as recited in claim 17, wherein the joining step occurs at an outer diameter or an inner diameter of said arc.

20. (original) The method as recited in claim 17, wherein the joining step creates a continuous joint along said arc.

21 - 23. (cancelled)

24. (currently amended) A method of making a brush seal having multiple stages, comprising the steps of:

providing discrete plates and discrete bristle arrangements
within a fixture;

creating a stack of said discrete plates and discrete bristle arrangements to define said multiple stages of said brush seal within said fixture; and

simultaneously joining said stack of said discrete plates and said discrete bristle arrangements to create said brush seal.

25. (original) The method as recited in claim 24, wherein said bristle arrangement includes:

a plurality of bristles arranged along a length; and

a joint extending along said length and securing said plurality of bristles together.

26. (original) The method as recited in claim 25, wherein said plurality of bristles are arranged in an arc, and said joint extends along said arc.

27. (original) The method as recited in claim 26, wherein said arc is a circle.

28. (original) The method as recited in claim 25, wherein said joint extends continuously along said length.

29. (original) The method as recited in claim 24, wherein the joining step comprises welding.

30. (original) The method as recited in claim 29, wherein said plates include a windage cover.

31. (cancelled)

32. (currently amended) A brush seal comprising at least one bristle arrangement for subsequent use in a brush seal, each said bristle arrangement comprising a plurality of bristles arranged in a length and held together, wherein a feature holding said plurality of bristles together consists of by a joint extending along said length, a back plate, and at least one additional plate, and said back plate, said at least one additional plate, and said joint being welded together at a single time so as to form a unitary brush seal structure.

33. (currently amended) The ~~bristle arrangement~~ brush seal as recited in a claim 32, wherein said joint is a weld joint.

34. (currently amended) The ~~bristle arrangement~~ brush seal as recited in a claim 32, wherein said bristles each have opposed ends, and said joint is located at one of said opposed ends.

35. (currently amended) The ~~bristle arrangement~~ brush seal as recited in a claim 32, wherein said plurality of bristles are metallic.

36. (cancelled)

37. (currently amended) The ~~bristle arrangement~~ brush seal as recited in a claim ~~36~~ 32, wherein a plurality of the bristle arrangements are ~~subsequently~~ combine with a plurality of said plates to form a multiple stage brush seal.

38. (currently amended) The ~~bristle arrangement~~ brush seal as recited in a claim 32, wherein said length defines an arc.

39. (currently amended) The ~~bristle arrangement~~ brush seal as recited in a claim 38, wherein said arc is a circle.

40. (currently amended) The ~~bristle arrangement~~ brush seal as recited in a claim 39, wherein said arc has an outer diameter and an inner diameter, and said joint is located at said outer diameter or said inner diameter.

41. (currently amended) The ~~bristle arrangement~~ brush seal as recited in a claim 32, wherein said joint is continuous.

42. (currently amended) The ~~bristle arrangement~~ brush seal as recited in a claim 32, wherein said plurality of bristles are grouped in tufts, said joint securing said tufts together.

43. (new) A multiple stage brush seal comprising a plurality of bristle arrangements comprising a plurality of bristle arrangements having a welded joint at one end, a back plate adjacent one of said bristle arrangements, a single middle plate positioned between said plurality of bristles and located adjacent a second one of said bristle arrangements, and a windage cover, said back plate, said middle plate, said windage cover, and said welded joints of said bristle arrangements being joined simultaneously so as to form a unitary, integrally joined multiple stage brush seal.